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practice often of less importance than the wife married first, and there is sometimes quite a conflict between the principles of age and legality.

Various factors, such as the household arrangements of the polygynous system, tend to make the tie between a mother and her own children, and more especially between mother and son, very strong and lasting. It is often possible to distinguish between the brothers in a polygynous household by the degree of resemblance in general nature and character to their mother. Children share any stigma that may be attached to their mother, and according as a man likes a wife so he likes her children. There is thus a high degree of solidarity between uterine brothers and sisters, who always like each other more than siblings by other wives. The attachment between Lovedu mother and child rests upon the firm foundations of a suckling period of several years, during which the child spends much of its time snugly strapped to her back. It is in many ways also an easier relationship than that among Europeans, with fewer prohibitions, fewer punishments and fewer of the petty grounds of conflict associated with such refinements as keeping hands or clothes clean.

The Lovedu girl is much with her mother, but she leaves home to get married soon after puberty and it is the boy in whose later life the mother plays the greatest role. During his boyhood the mother is the champion of her son. If he has been bullied by another, it is she who will take up the cudgels for him, and many of the worst quarrels between women arise in defence of their children. A boy of fifteen was pulling about and beating a boy of ten because he had not gone out to herd. Two men, in passing, called on him to desist, but to no avail till one of them said to a child standing near, 'Run and tell his mother Dwagu is killing her child.' The mother arrived and harangued Dwagu, who left off, but stoutly defended himself against her scolding tongue, and there the matter ended. When a young man marries, his mother is the dominating figure in his household. She controls his relations with his wife, telling him how to conduct himself while she is pregnant or during the suckling period, giving permission (indirectly through other old women) for their first sexual intercourse. When Masilu, a young man from town, came home ill, it was his mother who took him to a doctor. Ramano, after eight years absence in town, came home because his mother called him back; and Madume, a married man with two children, succeeded in avoiding a dangerous ritual office largely because his mother did not want him to undertake it. Even though he may be head of the village with authority over all its inmates, a man will still be constantly appealing to his mother's greater age and experience for guidance in matters that fall outside his own experience, more especially if his father is dead. Yet the mother, who so greatly controls her son, will never dare to have dealings with a stranger in the absence of the men nor presume to show him over the village. The son is the natural guardian of his mother. Should it be decided that she should move away from her husband's village, even if the cause be witchcraft, her sons will accompany her. Upon the youngest son, more particularly, falls the duty of caring for his parents in their old age.

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sit down and cry, but, beyond a few sympathetic words from his friends and the injunction to be quiet, nothing is done which may enhance his sense of his own importance. In competition with the growing interests of the toddler, who is able also to partake of the ordinary food of adults, suckling becomes of less and less importance, indulged in only at night or when he feels in need of being fondled. His companions, too, many of them a little older than himself, begin to tell him there are worms in his mother's breast and perhaps even tease him a little. If there is no younger brother or sister, a child may continue drinking at his mother's breast until about four or five years of age and it is not at all an unusual sight to see a boy of five stealing a drink at his mother's breast before running off in the morning to herd goats with the others. Most children leave off drinking quite naturally; sometimes, however, the mother puts some chili on her breast or a bitter herb to deter the child. It is said that boys generally like to drink from the breast much longer than do girls, and certainly it was little boys from three to seven years of age, not little girls, who used to nestle up to and stealthily fondle one of us.

There is no necessary connexion between weaning and the resumption of sexual intercourse by the parents, which may take place at any time after teething and depends largely upon the number of wives there are. It is, however, believed that normal sex relations should not be resumed till after weaning. If they are resumed before the child is able to walk, the old women who control such relations between husband and wife will warn the parents to be careful: 'For who will carry both children?' Sex intercourse on the part of its mother is believed to harm the suckling child. That is why, when husband and wife resume such relations, some of the semen of the husband must be smeared all over the child 'that it may know its father' and not take ill. Often the semen is mixed with powdered medicine as well as with the vaginal secretions of its mother. A suckling woman is seldom accused of adultery; it is thought that she would not wilfully do a thing that is harmful to her child. Christians resume intercourse after the child is a few months old; such external intercourse is said by them to 'make the child grow'. The sending of children to the mother's mother for a few years is likewise not definitely associated with the weaning, though naturally it cannot take place before.

Grown-ups try to teach children to greet (*bulha*) at an early age or they clap their hands to make the toddlers dance, however unsteadily. When a child is able to go on an errand to the next courtyard, this is considered a great advance. It is then said, 'The child is able to hear.' Bodily control is not expected of small children; but by the time a child is about three years old its mother will take it outside the village near the ash heap and smack it if it messes in the hut or courtyard. At five or six a child will go out into the bush.

There are few restrictions in the life of a small child: no elders run after him with injunctions not to touch this or that; if he chooses to roll in the ash heap, he may do so without getting into any greater trouble than a mild rebuke from his mother, who will tell him she objects to suckling so dirty a boy. One may see a child playing with a sharp knife without a word of admonition from his parents. There are no regular hours. A

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593 If a wife refuses cohabitation, there is usually a good reason, but a reason that has nothing to do with sexual incompatibility. The husband concerned will perhaps solicit the aid of the old women; but never will he dare say that he can go elsewhere for his pleasure, for she has equal power to retaliate in that manner. The Lovedu know
● 833 of the belief of other tribes that continued sexual intercourse after
843 pregnancy builds up the child forming in the womb. They also continue intercourse, but they do not stress, and even deny, that semen builds up the foetus. It is worth noting that sexual intercourse at a late stage of pregnancy (after the seventh month) is considered not quite correct, and this ideal is reflected in the anger of the midwives, who may reprimand the husband if they find signs, as they think, of his semen on the new-born infant. Nor is the sexual act brought into relation with so many special occasions as elsewhere; it has not to any extent been institutionalized in connexion with dangerous or new enterprises, as is the case among the Shangana-Tonga in their midst. Full coitus is taboo while a mother suckles her child; the milk of the new pregnancy will poison the child, but a child is not sent away when sexual relations are
842 resumed. Even the theme of fertility is handled with moderation or submerged under a mass of ritual. A wife is not ochred on her first pregnancy and, in those ceremonies that are directed to fertility, this motive is kept far in the background. Likewise, barrenness in a woman is not regarded as entitling a man to nullify his marriage and, when a substitute is sent, the children are presumed to be, not the children of the barren wife, but of the substitute. The conception of 'buying a womb' is negatived by the fact that full *munyualo* is given for the substitute, who is not subservient to, but independent of, the barren wife. These arrangements also imply that barrenness is not a great humiliation.
837 A married woman is theoretically denied the right of having children if her husband is impotent or absents himself for years. In practice, 'picking up children in the veld' is realistically tolerated, but it must be done surreptitiously, for the custom in other tribes, whereby the husband appoints a 'bull', is not approved. A wife can never be lent to another, for, as the proverb runs, 'About clothes you may say, "Lend them to me," but never about a woman' (*ŋŋ'adimemi gi a gwo, mundu a su ŋŋ'adime*).

Marital fidelity is not a matter of great importance; a father will reprimand his adulterous son, but only because in his pursuit of other women he fails in his duty to look after his wife—that is the main thing in marriage. Similarly a wife's adultery can never be the cause of divorce; but it must be judicious; it must not offend the proprieties. No doubt a man has greater opportunities than a woman and before marriage one may speak of a double standard of morality, but after marriage the differences are small. Both a husband and a wife can administer medicines to the other partner, making extra-marital irregularities very dangerous to health. A wife during pregnancy by a lover is also a grave danger to her husband. On the whole, the remarkable thing is, not that there is marital infidelity, but that there is so little of it. After all, a man may not 'mix' his wives; he cannot go from the one to the other; he cannot bring

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calm, or soothe) the village. Cooling is an effective weapon against sorcery: when the doctor made Nagambi vomit the foreign object introduced into his stomach by a sorcerer and causing the illness *khilevo* (thing caused to be eaten) he ordered it to be buried in a wet place and water to be squirted (*hu phasa*) over it with an injunction to the disease to return to its sender. Even the gods must be kept cool, for if hot they stand up (*va ema*), are discontented, and make trouble; hence the black river stone in many shrines and perhaps also the river stones in the drums. 'To cool' might be translated by our phrases, to calm, to free from agitation, to soothe, to appease, or, more generally, to put right.

The great role of sex in medical practice can only be briefly dealt with. Many illnesses and even death are attributed to sexual intercourse in certain circumstances or to some supposed abnormality in the sexual organs. Some men and women are believed to have a small thick hair (*lepoya*) in their genitals which enters the stomach of any one with whom they cohabit and there pecks (*hu goba*). The *lepoya* from a man will cause the woman he impregnates to die in childbirth, and the *lepoya* of a woman kills all her lovers. Pheduli, whose wife's death was attributed to *lepoya*, found some difficulty in re-marrying, and the parents of the girl whose love overcame her fear insisted on his submitting to curative treatment before the marriage. But usually there is merely rumour that So-and-so has *lepoya* and no definite precautions are taken. Men avoid intercourse with a menstruating woman, not because of danger to her, but because, as even educated men in the towns believe, they are liable to become afflicted with swollen penis or urethritis. *Mafa*, swelling of the whole body, is contracted if one, without previous steaming and mutual inoculation, cohabits with one's deceased brother's wife; but a stranger, though liable to get ill, does not contract *mafa*, because it is chiefly due to the 'dirt' of one's brother.

To *dzire* or *vuhwadi nya vasadi*, the woman's disease, and the most dreaded of all diseases, more than 30 per cent. of the deaths of men during our stay among the Lovedu was attributed. It is believed to be contracted by a man if, without previous precautionary treatment, he has sexual intercourse with a woman who has had a miscarriage or abortion or whose child has died before weaning. So fatal is it regarded to be that, unless cured immediately, the patient's chances of getting well are seriously impaired by the weight of subtle mass suggestion and his complete surrender to the inevitable. One illustration, the death of an educated man and a close friend of ours, will suffice. He had an irritating cough which every one believed to be *dzire*, but one European doctor found nothing wrong, while another, to whom we explained our anxiety, diagnosed miocardiosis, which would readily respond to hospital treatment. Our friend had no faith in the diagnosis and refused to go to hospital; he resorted to one Native doctor after another and vainly endeavoured to get 'medicine' from the girl he suspected. He became more and more emaciated, resigned himself to his fate and within a month after examination by the second European doctor he was dead.

Dzire is not syphilis nor a sexual disease. Its main symptom is coughing, but any illness, even if there is hardly any cough, may be diagnosed as

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833 753 *ḓivo* if the circumstances of the personal relations of the patient justify such a diagnosis. People thought that Maḓaradani's cough was *ḓivo*, but when he insisted that he had no lovers it was diagnosed as *Mbilwa*; Mulado's debility was probably due to chronic malaria, but his friends suspected that he had taken no precautionary measures before resuming co-habitation with his wife, who had miscarried after seven months. *Ḓivo* is distinguished from *lefiha* (consumption) by its rapid course and the fact that *lefiha* (*ku fiha*, to breathe) is not caused by women. *Ḓivo* [347] can be cured only in its earliest stages, an ingredient of the medicine being a portion of the abortion or, in the case of intercourse with a woman who has lost a child, can be prevented by steaming and mutual inoculation. The prevalence of *ḓivo* suggests that abortions are common and that effective abortifacients are in general use. In reality, however, innocent women are accused as soon as a lover falls ill, and rather than be thought murderers, they often give him medicine purporting to be a portion of the abortion mixed with sand to be used as a cure.

753 769 Disease and healing are in the last resort connected with the guardianship of the ancestors. If they are annoyed and relax their vigilance, their descendants may be rendered susceptible to disease, or medicines used cannot have their full effect. Ancestors, however, do not merely ward off disease or assist cure; they also actively cause illness. The crying all day of a baby may be due to the spirit of a grandfather pinching it in order that it should be given his name; sore eyes in children are often, and in adults sometimes, attributed to ancestors; barrenness or difficult birth is laid at their door, and sometimes they seize the whole body of a person because they wish to 'possess' him. But ancestors never cause death: even if at first an illness is said to be due to them, should death supervene, it is attributed to witches. Complaints of living relatives, especially of the father's sister, may also cause illness.

754 By far the most important of all causes of ill-health, however, is the evil work of witches and sorcerers. Certain illnesses, such as *Mbilwa*, are characteristic of sorcery and can be contracted in no other manner. But any disease may be caused by witchcraft and witches may avail themselves of the opportunity offered by any minor illness to enter and aggravate it. Diagnosis depends on the course of the illness. Dysentery is regarded as due to natural causes; but should it not respond to treatment or should the patient suspect an enemy, a witch will be implicated. During the 1938 smallpox epidemic, the head of a district which was more hardly hit than its neighbours called a meeting of residents. Men declared, 'Smallpox kills people here; they merely get ill and recover elsewhere. There is a witch in our midst.' Money was collected, three men sent to a diviner, and, in the end, two women were accused. A specialized cause of illness is legitimate vengeance-magic used against theft and called *Mbidzha*, which makes the finger of the thief swell up or the stolen goat blow in his belly.

753 It must not be imagined that the Lovedu do not recognize a large number of diseases as natural. Many illnesses 'just come'. Such are all minor ailments like coughs, colds, stomach disorders, and also other more serious diseases like dysentery and malaria. Too much beer is